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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/080,914	02/22/2002	Randy Harris	291958173US	7791

25096 7590 03/09/2005

PERKINS COIE LLP  
PATENT-SEA  
P.O. BOX 1247  
SEATTLE, WA 98111-1247

EXAMINER

LEADER, WILLIAM T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1742

DATE MAILED: 03/09/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/080,914

Applicant(s)

HARRIS ET AL.

Examiner

William T. Leader

Art Unit

1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 December 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-72 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 19,21-34 and 38-72 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4,5,8,14-16,18,35 and 36 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3,6,7,9-13,17,20 and 37 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/7/2004.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### DETAILED ACTION

1. Receipt of the papers filed on December 14, 2004, is acknowledged. In response to the restriction requirement, applicant has elected Group I, claims 1-72, without traverse. Nonelected claims 73-94 have been canceled. Claims 1-72 are pending.
2. The amendment to claim 51 in the response filed on May 7, 2004, is deemed to have overcome the rejection of record under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35

U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35

U.S.C. 103(a).

5. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 14-16, 18, 35 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leedy in view of Schmidt for the reasons given in the office action of September 15, 2003, and in view of the following comments.

6. Applicant's Remarks have been carefully considered but are not deemed to be persuasive. Applicant argues that Leedy fails to disclose or suggest that all of the processing stations of the apparatus being manually accessible to a user. Applicant further argues that even though Leedy discloses that "a module can be manually loaded", Leedy fails to illustrate or describe how the one module is manually accessible. This argument is not convincing. Instant claim 1 recites that all of the processing stations are manually accessible to a user. The use can perform the function of manually loading workpieces. No structure is recited. Thus applicant's claims are considered to encompass any structure which makes a processing station manually accessible. The processing chambers shown in figure 1 of Leedy clearly have openings through which the workpieces are transported to and from the chambers. These openings are considered to fall within the structure required by claim 1.

7. With respect to claims 14 and 15, applicant argues that claim 14 recites that the modules are accessible from a single side of the apparatus, and that Leedy's modules are arranged in a semicircle around the wafer handler and accordingly, it

would appear improbable for a user to access all the modules from a single side.

This argument is not convincing. Applicant has specified no geometric arrangement of the processing stations in claim 1. While a linear arrangement of processing stations may have a front side and a back side, a circular arrangement may have an inside and an outside. All of the modules of the apparatus of Leedy are accessible from the inside of the circle about which they are positioned. This is considered to meet the limitations of claims 14 and 15. With respect to claim 18, the transfer device of Leedy is considered to be between wafer cassette holder and processing chambers. With respect to claim 35, applicant has not specified any geometric characteristics of the support surface. The top of one of the processing chambers of Leedy would serve as a support surface.

8. Applicant's Remarks with respect to claims 19 and 57 are persuasive.

9. Claims 19, 21-34, 38-72 are allowed.

10. Claims 3, 6-7, 9-13, 17, 20 and 37 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

11. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William T. Leader whose telephone number is 571-272-1245. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays-Thursdays and alternate Fridays, 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King, can be reached on 571-272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

WL

William Leader  
March 4, 2005

ROY KING  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECH. \* BY CENTER 1700